

# THE COMMONWEALTH GROWS

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## Agricultural Development Board Investment Philosophy

**The Kentucky Agricultural Development Board will invest the Kentucky Agricultural Development Fund in innovative proposals that increase net farm income and affect tobacco farmers, tobacco-impacted communities, and agriculture across the state through stimulating markets for Kentucky agricultural products, finding new ways to add value to Kentucky agricultural products, and exploring new opportunities for Kentucky farms and farm products.**

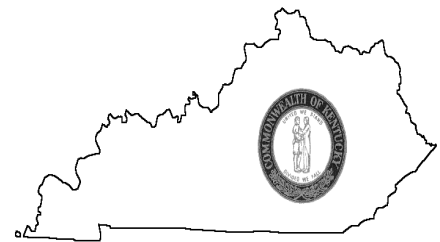
## COUNTY COUNCIL REAPPOINTMENT PROCESS

BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JOHN-MARK HACK

HB 611 established that the initial terms of all County Agricultural Development Council members would expire on June 30, 2002. The law also says that council members may be reappointed by the local organizations charged with nominating members to the councils, including the FSA County Committee, the local Soil Conservation District, and the County Extension Council.

While the past 18 months have often involved some rough and tumble times, we are asking all our county council members to thoroughly consider accepting another term of office on the local council. The tough times involved in the start-up of this effort were a natural and inevitable part of getting something as big as the Agricultural Development Fund process off the ground.

While the frustrations and anxieties were many, it is critically important that we maintain continuity of leadership in this second phase of Kentucky's revitalization of its agricultural economy. On behalf of Governor Patton and the Agricultural Development Board, I am asking all council members to commit another term of office to this process.



The leadership of our councils is the engine making this giant machine move forward. Without the input of each of our council members and your local leadership, this effort would be stalled. Please give thorough consideration to lending your leadership to this effort for another term of office. With continuity in our local leadership, we can together take Kentucky agriculture to new heights.

## CALENDAR OF AGRICULTURAL MEETINGS AND EVENTS

### Forest Field Day

Friday May 3 beginning 10:00 am at Harry Perry Farm in Henry County

Gary Anderson of The Forest School will be discussing management techniques of woodlots for better timber, mushroom, and herb production at this University of Kentucky event. Call (502) 845-2811 to register.

### 2002 Beginning Beekeeping Class: Troubleshooting

Sponsored by the Allen County Beekeepers Association

Saturday May 11 from 1:00 to 4:00 pm

Classes will be conducted by Tom Webster, Apiculture Extension Specialist. For more information or registration materials, please contact Tom at (502) 597-6351 or twebster@gwmail.kysu.edu

## PROJECT SPOTLIGHT: KENTUCKY HORTICULTURE COUNCIL

Horticulture is the production, use, and dissemination of specialized crops such as fruits, vegetables, trees, shrubs, herbs, and floral crops. These are all products that Kentucky will probably be seeing more of as tobacco farmers diversify through the agricultural development process. In recent years, interest in horticulture has been increasing.

Dr. Dewayne Ingram, Chairman of the Horticulture Department at the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, talks about the transition from tobacco into horticulture production and says that some of the equipment used in tobacco production can be used in certain areas of horticulture production. However, he also points out that there are differences between tobacco production and horticulture production, saying, "Generally, horticulture production is much more management intensive than tobacco, especially high-value horticultural crops. It's a whole different level of management intensity that's required

to be successful."

He has seen the trend in recent years toward farmers diversifying into horticulture production. Dewayne says, "In the last few years, three new marketing cooperatives have been organized, specializing in fresh produce."

Recognizing the need for a comprehensive, statewide program to assist those producers who are transitioning to horticulture production, the Kentucky Horticulture Council worked with the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture and the Kentucky Department of Agriculture to create a project that aims to increase the probability of success for new horticultural ventures and that expands existing horticultural enterprises. The Agricultural Development Board, chaired by Governor Paul Patton, presented the first payment of the \$2.4 million approved for the project to representatives of the project at the Capitol.

For the Horticulture Council, this project is the culmination of the work they have been doing in Kentucky for the past decade. The council was established in 1991 by horticultural leaders from 13 industry associations to exchange information between the groups and



Pictured from left to right are: Lee Todd, President of the University of Kentucky, C.A. Pantle, Chairman of the KHC, Dave Loney, President of the Kentucky Vineyard Society, Governor Paul Patton, Dewayne Ingram, Chairman of the UK Horticulture Department, Tom Weeks, Secretary/Treasurer of the KHC, Charlie Wilson, Wilson's Nursery, and Billy Ray Smith, Commissioner of Agriculture

### RECEIVE THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF AGRICULTURAL POLICY

As the official newsletter of The Governor's Office of Agricultural Policy, The Commonwealth Grows disperses information each month to all those interested in the agricultural development process. Projects funded by the Agricultural Development Board are spotlighted to show how they were created and what they hope to accomplish. Interviews with Agricultural Development Board Members and county agricultural development council members provide unique insights into the process. A calendar of meetings inform those who may

be interested in attending. And articles on legal and administrative issues clarify details related to project applications, board policies, and county council responsibilities.

The Commonwealth Grows is available free of charge. If you would like to receive the newsletter or know someone who might be interested in the agricultural development process, please send your name and mailing address to:

*The Commonwealth Grows*  
Governor's Office of Agricultural Policy  
404 Ann Street  
Frankfort, KY 40601

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## HORTICULTURE COUNCIL CONTINUED FROM PAGE TWO

set priorities for horticulture in the state. Dewayne commended those leaders who have invested a significant amount of time and energy on behalf of Kentucky horticulture for the past decade by saying, "It wouldn't have happened without them. The value of that can't be overstated."

The often overlooked horticulture industry creates nearly half a billion dollars in products and services for Kentucky. The project assists producers to become involved and flourish in horticulture, increasing the economic activity in local communities to help the economic vitality of our counties and communities.

The Kentucky Horticulture Council, working with the University of Kentucky Extension Service and the Kentucky Department of Agriculture's Marketing Division, has identified the needs in the current horticulture infrastructure. They will follow a two-part plan to address the greatest needs of technical advancements, production education, and product marketing. The first part of the plan will provide six horticulture specialists to offer on-farm demonstrations. Through these demonstrations provided by the Cooperative Extension Service, those interested in horticulture production can learn the best practices and have a higher success rate when they apply those produc-

tion techniques to their enterprise.

The second part of the plan will address the crucial need for marketing of the horticultural products. A specialist at the Department of Agriculture will assist in that coordination between producers and buyers of those products. As Dewayne explains, "It has to be a market driven process." He believes that Kentucky can have a competitive advantage over large companies in other states because we can provide more flexibility in what we produce and have the ability to tailor our products to meet the specific needs of buyers. In addition, Kentucky also can address the market that already exists within the state, considering that Kentucky grows less than ten percent of the vegetables that are consumed here. Dewayne suggests that, "Within season, there is the opportunity to capture a greater share of the market here."

As a first step for those interested in learning more about horticulture production, Dewayne suggests that county extension offices can be a good source of information. The website is available at [www.ca.uky.edu](http://www.ca.uky.edu). He also suggests that producers take inventory of what they already have including skills, labor, management, water sources, and access to capital and compare those to the requirements for specific horticultural enterprises.

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## PROJECTS APPROVED FOR FUNDING AT THE MARCH BOARD MEETING

All Creatures Veterinary Care - \$8,737 (Carter County) for equipment to provide pregnancy evaluations and fertility testing for livestock

Franklin County Conservation District - \$3,000 for shared-use equipment

Henry County Youth Goat Chain - \$5,000 for the establishment of a goat chain program for youth ages 4 to 15

Lewis County Vegetable Producers Association - \$99,030 for the creation of a farmers market and market shed

Robertson County Board of Education - \$14,420 for the construction of a greenhouse that will be utilized in an after-school Greenhouse Tech Program as well as traditional vocational agriculture instruction

Governor's Office of Agricultural  
Policy

404 Ann Street  
Frankfort, KY 40601

Phone: 502-564-4627  
Fax: 502-564-8990  
Email: govkyagpolicy@mail.state.ky.us



**Paul E. Patton**  
Governor

**John-Mark Hack**  
Executive Director,  
Governor's Office of  
Agricultural Policy

**Gordon C. Duke**  
Chief Financial Officer

**Penny R. Cline**  
Editor, *The Common-  
Wealth Grows*

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## INTERVIEW WITH DAVIESS COUNTY COUNCIL MEMBER AND PHASE I PROCESS REVIEW PARTICIPANT CHARLES DAWSON

As a Daviess County Council Member, Charles Dawson has volunteered his time working toward addressing agricultural issues in his area. Charles says the biggest agricultural concern in his county is, "The loss of tobacco and what's going to happen to our program." Farming since 1974, he knows first hand the impact that decreased tobacco income has had on his area and his family. More than half of his farm income each year has come from tobacco, although he also raises corn, soybeans, cattle, and will harvest timber this year.

The Daviess County Council has supported projects with the potential to assist those farmers facing reduced income. Speaking of his area, Charles says, "The Agricultural Diversification Program I like because it gives individuals a chance to do projects such as blueberries, ferns, and timber. Those are the kind of projects that can add income and value to our community." Projects such as a farmers' market in Owensboro, a high school agriculture program, The Ag Expo, and a goat cost-share program have also been funded in his area. Looking at the impact that the



Phase I process will have on Daviess County, Charles says, "I think we're going to have a grain program. We're going to have a strong cattle program. I think there'll still be tobacco. I'm beginning to think we're going to have goats. You're definitely going to see more diversification in agriculture."

Charles also spoke of the Phase I process and the efforts to fund those projects saying, "I didn't know what to expect and I was frustrated for the first several months because of all this, getting the rules and regulations set up. And I hope that we've accomplished through this the overall economic improvement of the farms in Daviess County." Visiting Frankfort to participate in the process review task force, he spoke to staff in the Governor's Office of Agricultural Policy about his experiences and frustrations about the process. Participants were invited to share their ideas on how to improve the process. He says, "I felt like all comments were welcome and I actually felt like I could make a comment." He hopes that more county council members will be able to have the opportunity to learn more about the process and share their ideas in similar meetings.